

From: Lois Laczko December 16, 2011 10:25:32 AM
Subject: Design Review Board Minutes 10/25/2011 ADOPTED
To: SimsburyCT_DesignMin
Cc:

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
OCTOBER 25, 2011
REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Emil Dahlquist, Chairman, called the Design Review Board meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: John Carroll, Anthony Drapelick, Rick Schoenhardt, Kevin E. Gray, Rita Bond and Charles Stephenson. Also in attendance were Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, Janis Prifti, Clerk, and other interested parties.

II. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Dahlquist appointed Commissioner Bond as an alternate for Mark Naccarato, and Commissioner Drapelick as an alternate for John Stewart.

III. SUBSTITUTIONS FOR DRAKE HILL PLAZA PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING - DISCUSSION BY STEVE WALKER, GROVE CAPITAL, LLC.

Chairman Dahlquist stated this discussion was tabled from the 10/11/11 meeting. Steve Walker of Grove Hill Property Fund, which owns the Mall and the Simsbury town Shops, stated his understanding that the issue is their substitute lighting fixture. He said at the site meeting in March they took a hard look at the fixtures and felt the scale too tall and the color a different tone of green than at Drake Hill; the carriage lights in the front of the Cannon building are black and the fixtures used match. He also had Apex run optics of the fixture originally approved vs. the substituted Sternberg fixture; they were concerned the lights would go into the different buildings in the Mall. He said the replacement lights better light the sidewalk. He said they communicated weekly with Town Planning providing on 3/14/11 by email a cut sheet of the replacement fixture; they followed up with a photo of the fixture. He stated time was of the essence for ordering the fixtures and they did not know until 30 days ago there was an issue.

Mr. Walker introduced lighting expert Sylvia ? of Apex Lighting who stated

they compared 100 watt metal halide on a 12-foot pole with a tight range distribution standard L26 lantern. She said the issue was to focus on the walkway and the original approved fixture was not as efficient as the Sternberg fixture with better backlight and providing light at the storefront with uniformity on the sidewalk and not bouncing light off buildings. Mr. Walker stated the location of the lights complied with what was originally approved. He said there was very little dialog about the lights; Commissioner Gray stated that was because they were using the right light. Chairman Dahlquist stated the fixture did not have to be identical, but needed to belong to a family of fixtures and asked if any Sternberg carriage style lights were considered. Mr. Walker said there are many lights in Town similar to what they substituted. Chairman Dahlquist stated one of the issues is that the Town is in the process of swapping those fixtures out. He asked why they transitioned from the approved lantern to the acorn fixture. Mr. Walker said they have had positive experience with them and they sent the information for approval and did not hear back; he felt they did nothing wrong. Mr. Peck was not aware of the request. The Commissioners stated it appears they made a choice to substitute the fixture and only provided information about the light they were ordering without properly asking for approval. Mr. Walker stated this is a very difficult project and they needed to move forward; he had a representative from Fitzgerald's present who liked the lights. Chairman Dahlquist said the project appears to be on hold. Commissioner Carroll stated a good working relationship has been enjoyed over time with Mr. Walker's organization, but the Board must take a look at the precedent set here for all applicants; it was Mr. Walker's responsibility to notify DRB of a change in plans. He said DRB can make a recommendation to the Zoning Commission to withhold C of O. Commissioner Schoenhardt stated the drawings presented to DRB were what they wanted to see and most fixtures have choices for distribution patterns which probably could have been specified for the original approved fixture. Commissioner Gardner stated there was a lack of follow through on both sides and the question is how to move forward.

The Commissioners restated the goal of a Town guideline that prefers a lantern style fixture for Simsbury Center; the fixture that was approved was changed without further application and there is concern about that precedent. Mr. Walker felt he took the necessary notification steps for the change and there was no reply to his email; they have expended money in a difficult economy and their Simsbury properties are upscale and well-managed.

Commissioner Carroll made and amended a motion that the Design Review Board finds this substitution of an alternative Acorn-style pedestrian light inconsistent with the intent and principles of the Guidelines of community design and recommends appropriate action by the Zoning Commission for the

following reasons:

- 1) It establishes an undesirable precedent.
- 2) The Design Guidelines specifically state that the recommended fixture within Town Center is a carriage-style, four-sided lighting fixture consistent with the streetscape lantern.
- 3) The fixtures that were installed are inconsistent with the approved site plans.

Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Chairman Dahlquist stated DRB has had a consistently good working relationship with Mr. Walker in the two major properties in Town Center and would like to see that continue into the future. He said the primary issues as stated in the motion lie in not following the procedure for a substitution during the course of construction and DRB's finding that the substituted fixture is inconsistent with the guidelines for community design re style of fixture. He said while the black color would be an acceptable alternative, the luminaire is the major issue from a design standpoint as stated in the motion; the Zoning Commission will make the final decision.

The Commissioners discussed that the luminaire could be swapped out. Commissioner Schoenhardt stated a better means of assuring compliance with approved plans is needed. Commissioner Drapelick reiterated the 3/14/11 email is only informational about what they "ordered".

IV. DISCUSSION

Commissioner Carroll made a motion to amend the agenda to start the meeting with the discussion items. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

a. Update on the Route 10 Traffic Corridor Study by CRCOG

Mr. Peck stated the Board of Selectmen endorsed the Study following the Steering Committee's endorsement on 10/12 with only minor revisions; he can provide copies tonight. He said a letter will go to CRCOG on 10/26 informing them of the endorsements so they can endorse and incorporate it into their transportation plan.

b. Update on Low Impact Development Guidelines

Mr. Peck said that today he completed a binder of information to send to

DEEP so that payment for the work can be released. He said paper copies of the inch thick information will soon be provided to DRB members and the graphics are impressive.

c. Update on Town Center Guidelines

Chairman Dahlquist distributed a paper provided by Nori Winter on "ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS" for discussion in advance of the 12/6 meeting; there are five categories based on street discussion. He believes DRB should look at what's in the current code and provide appropriate guidance. Commissioner Carroll asked what form the guidelines will take - addendum or new guideline. Mr. Peck said it has not been definitively decided but he anticipates they will retain the format and expand where necessary; Mr. Winter will receive an electronic copy of the guidelines. Mr. Peck said Mr. Winter will soon provide questions to consider for the focus groups. Chairman Dahlquist stated photos are important in developing examples and suggested each Commissioner develop a list of critical buildings and areas; e.g. Hopmeadow is historic in terms of buildings and architectural details with more variation on side streets. Mr. Peck discussed the idea of public-private partnerships in the future. Commissioner Carroll asked if there are any parking lot studies re usage. Mr. Peck said an analysis was done two summers ago re percentage of lots used; in the Charrette most areas had increased parking and they'd like to get parking into the Performing Arts Center; he said it would be difficult to move Septemberfest over but it is a good idea.

Mr. Peck said the location for the meetings with Mr. Winter will be Masonic Hall. On 12/6/11, they begin meeting at 9 a.m. with focus groups and staff during the day and at 5:30-7:00 p.m. with DRB followed by a public meeting from 7-9 p.m. On 12/7/11, there will be a debriefing to set a framework. Chairman Dahlquist stated the importance of setting critical guidance for discussion at the 11/22/11 DRB meeting.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Peck stated there will be a series of four talks beginning 10/26 presented by CLEAR of UCONN at Burlington Town Center on Wednesday evenings from 7-8:30 for \$5 each; some others will deal with preserving open space and financial considerations for different types of development.

VI. STAFF REPORTS

None.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of October 11, 2011

The October 11, 2011 minutes were amended on Line 63, from "Nod Road" to "Hopmeadow". Commissioner Gray made a motion to approve the October 11, 2011, minutes as amended. Commissioner Carroll seconded the motion, and it was passed, with Commissioner Stephenson abstaining.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Schoenhardt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Kevin E. Gray, Secretary